

## Message Text

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S/S: LCJOHNSTONE

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P R 260043Z JUN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 150386

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, EGEN, IT, US

SUBJECT: ITALIAN POLICE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON ALLEGED  
BRIBES PAID BY US. MULTINATIONALS

REF: ROME 8456

1. REFTTEL MOST TIMELY. WE APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S COMMENTS  
ON (1) POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF INVESTIGATIONS UNDER WAY  
IN U.S. AND ITALY RELATING TO ALLEGED PAYMENTS BY U.S.  
COMPANIES TO ITALIAN OFFICIALS, AND (2) NECESSITY TO  
CAREFULLY CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE GOI ON THIS  
DELICATE SUBJECT.

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2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT JEROME I. LEVINSON, CHIEF COUNSEL

OF THE SFRC SUBCOMMITTEE ON MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS (THE CHURCH COMMITTEE) AND HIS STAFF AIDE, KARIN LISSAKERS, PLAN TO TRAVEL TO ITALY JUNE 29. WHILE WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN INFORMED OF THE SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THEIR VISIT, WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT IT CONCERNS THE OIL AND BANANA CASES. WE HAVE BEEN FURTHER ADVISED BY STAFF OF THE SFRC (CHURCH) SUBCOMMITTEE ON MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE REQUESTED TO TESTIFY IN NEAR FUTURE

CONCERNING ALLEGED POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF U.S. OIL COMPANIES IN ITALY. MOBIL AND EXXON HAVE BEEN ASKED TO TESTIFY IN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON JULY 10 (FYI) AND COMMITTEE STAFF SUGGESTS THAT ITS HEARINGS WILL DISCLOSE ILLEGAL POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY U.S. OIL COMPANIES IN VERY LARGE AMOUNTS OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS. (END FYI) TO DATE, OIL COMPANIES HAVE NOT BRIEFED THE DEPARTMENT ON THIS SITUATION.

3. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED REQUEST FROM JOHN J. MCCLOY, WHO IS CONDUCTING AN INVESTIGATION FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF GULF OIL COMPANY INTO ITS PAYMENTS ABROAD PURSUANT TO A JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT WITH THE SEC, TO HELP HIM COMMUNICATE WITH THE ITALIAN PARLIMENTARY COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THESE CASES IN ORDER TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ITALIANS MAY HAVE ON GULF ACTIVITIES. THIS REQUEST APPARENTLY RESPONDS TO INQUIRY FROM CHURCH COMMITTEE STAFF ASKING MCCLOY WHETHER HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ITALIAN AUTHORITIES. WE WOULD LIKE TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO MCCLOY'S REQUEST ASAP, BUT WE NEED EMBASSY'S ADVICE ON HOW TO PROCEED IN VIEW OF OUTSTANDING REQUESTS WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM ITALIAN AUTHORITIES.

4. THE ITALIAN EMBASSY HAS MADE SEVERAL REQUESTS OF THE DEPARTMENT, MOST RECENTLY AMBASSADOR ORTONA RAISED THE ISSUE WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN ON JUNE 24, FOR INFORMATION IN THE HANDS OF SEC, PARTICULARLY WITH REFERENCE TO UNITED BRANDS. WE HAVE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THE SEC HAD NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, THAT IT IS ATTEMPTING TO OBTAIN SUCH INFORMATION FROM UNITED BRANDS THROUGH COURT ACTION, AND THAT ONCE SUCH INFORMATION

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BECAME AVAILABLE THE SEC WOULD BE PREPARED IN PRINCIPLE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER DIRECTLY WITH ITALIAN OFFICIALS. WE HAVE ALSO SUGGESTED TO THE ITALIAN EMBASSY THAT ANY APPROACHES TO THE SEC WOULD BE FACILITATED BY CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS AS TO EXACTLY WHAT INFORMATION THEY WANTED.

5. WE HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY LEARNED FROM THE SEC THAT IT HAS SOME INFORMATION CONCERNING THE OIL COMPANIES THAT

IT WOULD BE PREPARED TO SHARE WITH ITALIAN EMBASSY WHICH HAS ALSO ASKED FOR INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE SO FAR TO PIN DOWN JUST WHAT INFORMATION THE SEC HAS AND UNTIL WE DO SO WE DO NOT WISH TO GO BACK TO THE ITALIANS.

6. PENDING CLARIFICATION OF WHAT INFORMATION IS DEVELOPED BY THE CHURCH COMMITTEE, WE ARE RELUCTANT TO RESPOND TO A REQUEST FROM THE ITALIAN NATIONAL POLICE. IN PRINCIPLE, WE WOULD NOT BE IN POSITION TO COMMUNICATE ANY INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE CONGRESS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION UNTIL A DETERMINATION IS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT TO RELEASE THAT INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC.

7. AT THIS POINT WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU INFORM APPROPRIATE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS. WE AGREE WITH YOU THAT REQUESTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED IN DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS THROUGH THE ITALIAN EMBASSY TO THE DEPARTMENT. WE WOULD THEN PUT EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH THE APPROPRIATE U.S. AGENCY FOR BRIEFING. KISSINGER

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